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Power Equations in the Fiction of J. K. Rowling and Samit Basu: A Comparative Study of Select Texts

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01. Introduction

The concept of 'Power' is implicitly come from Derrida's deconstruction of logo-centrism: the belief that language can facilitate access to the truth. The interest in power and its operation dominates the poststructuralist criticism in the decade of 1980s and drives chiefly from the theories of Michel Foucault. He argues that power is inherent in all types of social relations and all social relations are relations of power, whether in one family or in social institutions and the hierarchies of government.

Power-knowledge discourse does not stand for 'knowledge is power'. It is a relationship that shows how certain kind of knowledge is suppressed and other knowledge is come in effect through power. Power can produce knowledge and also can suppress it.

The power equations are found in the fiction of J. K. Rowling and also in the fiction of Samit Basu. They operate same like the equations in mathematics i.e. something equals to something else. There are the agents who use their power to operate the societal institutions.

J. K. Rowling is also known as Robert Galbraith, she was born on July 31, 1965 in Yate, Gloucestershire, England. She is a British novelist, film producer and screen-play-writer. She is popularly known for her *Harry Potter* series. The Harry Potter books gained worldwide popularity, sold not less than 400 million copies and won many awards. The books have become the best-selling book series in history and become the basis for the Harry Potter film series for which Rowling served as a producer on the final installment.

Rowling was working in Amnesty International as a researcher and bilingual secretary when she got the idea for the *Harry Potter* series while

she was waiting for the delayed train from Manchester to London on the railway station of Manchester in 1990. Until she finished the first novel in the *Harry Potter* series in 1997, she lost her mother, had the first child then divorced from her first husband and relative property. After that Rowling has written books for the adult readers: *The Casual Vacancy* (2012). Under her pseudonym, Robert Galbraith, she has written a crime fiction novel: *The Cuckoo's Calling* (2013), *The Silkworm* (2014) and *Career of Evil* (2015).

Rowling is the UK's best-selling living writer, with sales more than £ 238 million. She has lived a life from poor to rich, *Sunday Times* Rich List tells Rowling's fortune at £ 600 million, ranked as the 197th richest person in England. *Time* magazine called her as a runner-up for 2007 Person of the Year. She has given social, moral and political inspiration to her fans. She was also named the "most Influential Woman in Britain in October 2010. She has done charitable works also like: she has contributed to Comic Relief, supported to One Parent Families, Multiple Sclerosis Societies of Great Britain and Lumos.

The first in the seven books of Harry Potter series: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* fulfilled on popular witchcraft in record time. The first three books hit world libraries, schools and the New York Times best-sellers list, like a spiritual flood, breaking all the barriers of ages and captured children's attention around the world. The fans of Harry Potter used to stick stickers of purple thunderbolt on their forehead. The mark symbolizes the satanic S. This mark relates to Harry, a student wizard with amazing magical powers and an enticingly scary destiny which he has to gain.

Samit Basu was born on 14 December 1979. He is an Indian novelist, who writes fantasy and superhero novels, books for children, short stories and graphic novels. Basu has grown up in Calcutta, where he studied at Don Bosco School, and later Presidency College, Kolkata, where

he obtained a degree in Economics. He was not successful in his academics in Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad to write *Simoqin Prophecies*. Then he has completed his course in Broadcasting and Documentary Film Making at the University of Westminster, London.

Basu is famous in India from the year 2003 when *Outlook*, the magazine declared sixteen Indian achievers under the age of twenty five along with the other persons like: Konkona Sen Sharma and Shreya Ghosal. Basu was declared the promising Emerging Indian like other prominent yong Indians like Vidya Balan according to the survey of IMRB (Market Research Survey and Business Consultancy Firm) and it is also shown by *The Week* Magazine.

Basu has written The *Simoqin Prophecies, The Manticore's Secret* and The *Unwaba Revelations*, the three parts of the series the Game World Trilogy. It has been published by Penguin Books, India. He has been recognized world-wide by the publication of *Turbulence*, a Superhero novel in India, Pakistan and England. It has been published by Titan Books on International level and the sequel, *Resistance*. He also wrote a series of children's books under the title: *Adventures of Stoob*. And he has also written Terror on the Titanic, a YA means young adult fiction novel.

The *Simoqin Prophecies*, the first novel by Samit Basu, was written when he was 22 and he published it when he was 23. *The Simoqin Prophecies* was written in English and it has been published in Swedish by Ordbilder and German (From Piper Verlag). The novels in the trilogy, *The Manticore's Secret* and the *Unwaba Revelations* were published in 2005 and 2007 respectively. The Game World Trilogy has been well recognized, appreciated widely and become India's best-selling books.

Harry travels between the two worlds same like other students of Hogwarts: the mysterious world of magic and the mundane world of muggles, who are boring, biased and blinded humans, they don't believe in

the world of witches and magical powers. Harry's aunt and uncle are cruel. They behave inhumanly with the hero of the story, Harry Potter.

The skinny green eyed kid with spectacles and thunder-bolt mark on his forehead under a shock of unruly black hair makes a sympathetic hero. He was orphaned at the age one, Harry survived mysteriously when the wicked wizard Lord Voldemort tried to kill his parents. Many timid wizards instead of his name dare to say, "Who Must Not Be Named". When Lord Voldemort tried to kill one year old baby, he lost most of his powers, and gave a thunderbolt scar on Harry's forehead which can symbolize the peculiar psychic power and triumph over evil.

Harry lives a miserable life of muggle for the next ten years in his uncle's home in London, continuously tortured by his cruel guardians and cousin, but when eleventh birthday of Harry comes then everything changes. He comes to know that he is a wizard of great fame, someone who at once conquered even death and crippled the devil. He also receives the acceptance to Hogwarts as a student.

The haunted place of Hogwarts is different from our world, but with its blend of earthliness and practical magic, it has captured the minds of more than seven million people. Adults and children both like the *Harry Potter* series. Most people when start reading these books, don't stop till the end, and when finished, they read them again and again. The readers feel Harry's struggle, share his fear and sit with him through his class, transformation (turning something into something else), spells, and divination. They sense his pain of miserable life and accept his magnificent magical soaring.

02. Problems to be investigated:

The aim of the present research is to determine the power elements in the fiction of J. K. Rowling and Samit Basu. Power equations encourage the readers to explore the story in more detail. The aim of present research is to explore various issues related to power and power

equations in Rowling's Harry Potter series and the Basu's the Game World Trilogy. According to Michel Foucault power is something that is to be exercised. If power is not exercised by the agent it is no power.

Foucault defines power as an overreaching and omnipresent concept: power is everywhere, and it has many forms. One of the focuses of present research is indeed to demonstrate how Rowling and Basu incorporate Foucault's concepts, as well as other concepts of power, in their description of power in the fantasy world.

There are power equations in the series of Harry Potter and the Game World Trilogy, which is to be analyzed. Lord Voldemort is the villain in the story of Harry Potter, he divides his soul into seven pieces and put them in the secret places so that nobody reach and destroy them. Hence, Lord Voldemort can live without having any fear for death. In Basu's The Game World Trilogy there is rebirth of Rakshasa and the hero will also come to destroy him.

03. Objectives of the research work:

The purpose of the study may be stated as follows:

- To point out elements of power in Harry Potter series and Samit Basu's the Game World Trilogy.
- To compare the power equations in Harry Potter Series with the power equations in Basu's the Game World Trilogy.
- To investigate the impact of power equations on modern novels.
- To study how power equations encourage readers to explore them in more detail.

04. Assumptions:

1. There are elements of power in Harry Potter series and in the Game World Trilogy.
2. The power equations are found in Harry Potter series and the Game World Trilogy.
3. There is an impact of power equations on the modern novels.

4. The elements of witchcraft and power affect child psychology.
5. There are similarities and dissimilarities in the power equations in the fiction of J. K. Rowling and Samit Basu.

05. Research Methodology:

The researcher will use the descriptive and analytical method for the study proposed. The researcher would follow the MLA style of documentation. Even the interviews of the writers and the interviews of the eminent personalities on J. K. Rowling and Samit Basu and their works will be used in the process of this research work.

06. Scope & Limitations of the Study:

The present study will be based on the texts as primary sources: The first three texts: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* in the Seriesby J. K. Rowling and the texts in the Game World Trilogy: *The Simoqin Prophecies, The Manticore's Secret* and *The Unwaba Revelations* by Samit Basu.

However, the critical material available on J. K. Rowling and Samit Basu and their novels will be used as secondary sources. Taking into account the scope of the research work, the researcher would like to focus chiefly on the printed texts and not on the film versions.

07. Research Plan:

Chapter wise organization

The **first chapter,** Introduction will be informative in nature. First, it will present the background study, the growth and development of Power and Power Equations in English novels. Then it will present the ideology shaping twenty first century English novels.

The Second **Chapter,**All the previous works related to the 'Power' and the works of J. K. Rowling and Samit Basu will be taken into account in the Review of Literature.

The **third chapter** will be on the in depth study of 'Power Equations' in the first three texts in the Harry Potter series.

The **fourth chapter** will be on the in-depth study of 'Power Equations' in the three texts in the *Game World Trilogy* by Samit Basu.

The **fifth chapter** will compare the power equations in the first three texts of *Harry Potter* series with the power equations in the *Game World Trilogy*.

The **sixth and final chapter** will be about the conclusions drawn from the analysis. In addition the chapter will indicate the possibilities of further research.

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Chapterization

Chapter 1**: Introduction**

Chapter 2**: Review of Literature**

Chapter 3**: Power Equations in the Fiction of J. K. Rowling**

Chapter 4:**Power Equations in the Fiction of Samit Basu**

Chapter 5**: Comparison of Power Equations between J. K. Rowling's and Samit Basu's Fiction**

Chapter 6**: Conclusion**

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